

SRI GAURANGA BARI TEMPLE

at Katwa

Where Lord Caitanya took *sannyasa*



Sri Gauranga Bari Temple at Katwa is the actual site where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu took *sannyasa* from Sri Keshava Bharati in year 1510 AD at the end of His twenty-fourth year. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu left Navadvipa and crossed the river Ganges at a place known as *Nidayara-ghata*. Then He reached Kantaka-nagara, or Katoya (Katwa), where He accepted *sannyasa*. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu accepted *sannyasa*, three personalities were with Him to perform all the necessary activities. They were Nityananda Prabhu, Candrasekhara Acarya and Mukunda Datta. By the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, *kirtana* was performed for the entire day, and at the end of the day the Lord shaved off His hair. On the next day He became a regular *sannyasi*, with one rod (*eka danda*). From that day on, His name was *Sri Krishna Caitanya*. Before that, He was known as Nimai Pandita.

Sri Gadadhara dasa established this Gauranga Bari temple at Katwa. *Sri Caitanya-Caritamrta Adi-lila chapter 10 verse 53* states that Sri Gadadhara dasa, the twenty-third branch of the Caitanya tree, was understood to be the topmost, for he induced all the Muslim Kazis to chant the holy name of Lord Hari. Katwa is about an hour's distance from Sridham Mayapur.

Sri Caitanya-Caritamrta Adi-lila chapter 3 verse 34 purport mentions:

Lord Caitanya remained a householder only until His twenty-fourth year had passed. Then He entered the renounced order and remained manifest in this material world until His forty-eighth year. Therefore His sesa-lila, or the final portion of His activities, lasted twenty-four years. During the time of Lord Caitanya, the influence of Sankaracarya in society was very strong. People thought that one could accept sannyasa only in the disciplic succession of Sankaracarya. Lord Caitanya could have performed His missionary activities as a householder, but He found householder life an obstruction to His mission. Therefore He decided to accept the renounced order, sannyasa. Since His acceptance of sannyasa was also designed to attract public attention, Lord Caitanya, not wishing to disturb the social convention, took the renounced order of life from a sannyasi in the disciplic succession of Sankaracarya, although sannyasa was also sanctioned in the Vaisnava sampradaya.

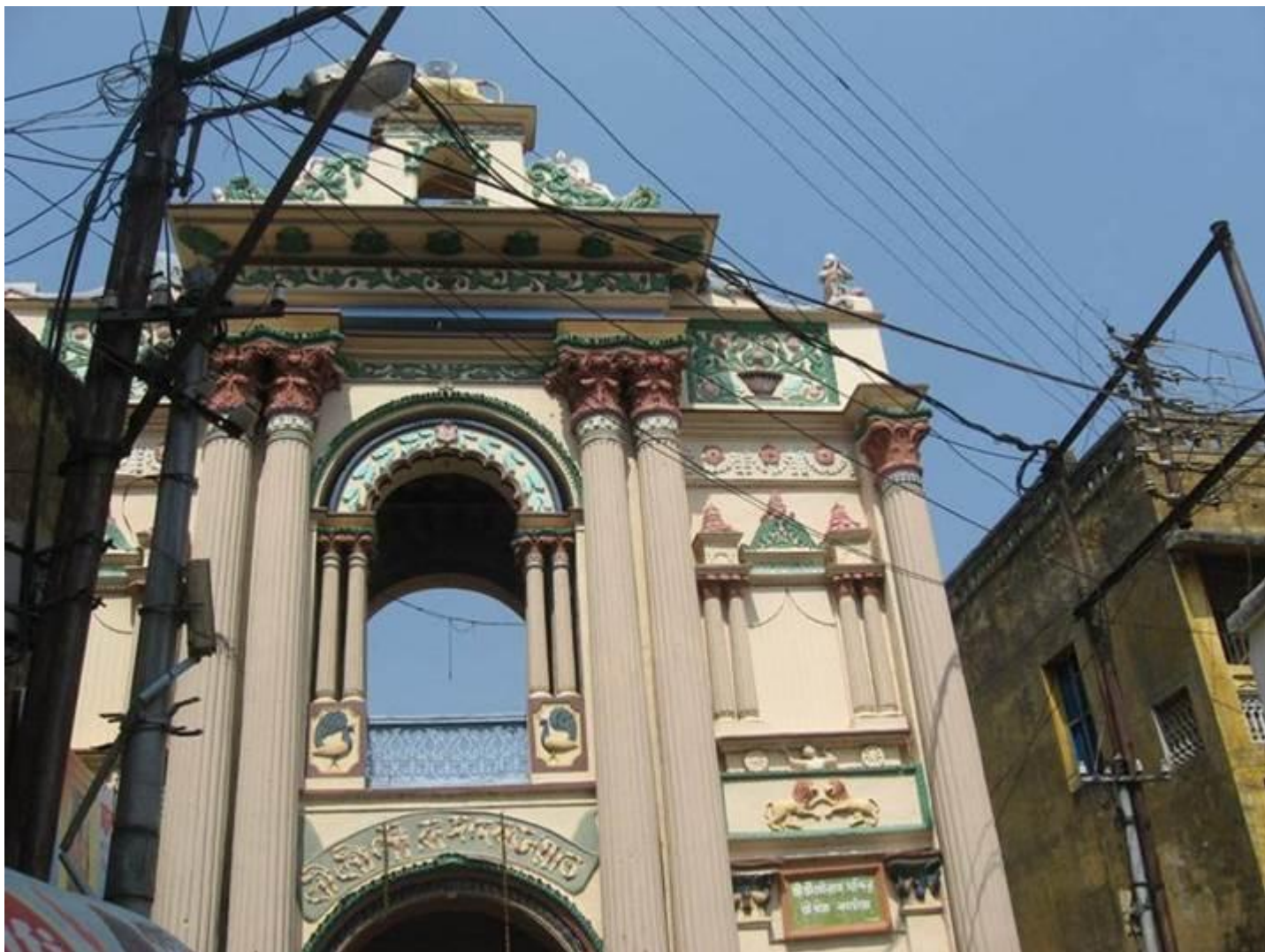
Lord Caitanya accepted sannyasa from Kesava Bharati. When He first approached Kesava Bharati, He was accepted as a brahmacari with the name Sri Krishna Caitanya Brahmacari. After He took sannyasa, He preferred to keep the name Krishna Caitanya.

The great authorities in the disciplic succession had not offered to explain why Lord Caitanya refused to take the name Bharati after He took sannyasa from a Bharati, until Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja volunteered the explanation that because a sannyasi in the Sankara-sampradaya thinks that he has become the Supreme, Lord Caitanya, wanting to avoid such a misconception, kept the name Sri Krishna Caitanya, placing Himself as an eternal servitor. A brahmacari is supposed to serve the spiritual master; therefore He did not negate that relationship of servitude to His spiritual master. Accepting such a position is favorable for the relationship between the disciple and the spiritual master. The authentic biographies also mention that Lord Caitanya accepted the danda (rod) and begging pot, symbolic of the sannyasa order, at the time He took sannyasa.



Nidayara ghata in Sridham Mayapur - Lord Caitanya left Navadvipa to Katwa to take sannyasa from this place.

One day Lord Caitanya suddenly clasped Lord Nityananda's hand taking Him away to a quiet and lonely spot. Lord Caitanya said, "listen, dear Nityananda, I am revealing My heart to You. The purpose of My advent was to deliver the entire world, but instead of delivering the living entities it seems I have to ultimately destroy them. The people are supposed to attain salvation just by seeing Me, whereas now their material bonds become stronger. I incarnated with the intention of liberating the good and innocent mass but now I have spoiled everything and am leading the people to their doom. Therefore, I have decided to shave off My head and take to the renounced life of a sannyasi, and go begging door to door. I will stand at the doors of those who wanted to attack Me with a begging bowl. Then these same aggressors will fall at My feet and in this way I will deliver the whole universe. Everyone respects a sannyasi, no one will ever think of harming a sannyasi. I have fully decided to take up the sannyasa order and leave My home and family. Please do not feel sad due to this, rather please give Me permission to take up the renounced life. Whatever is Your desire I will certainly act in accordance, but You should consider that I have taken this incarnation for a specific reason and so require Your permission in this matter. If you really want to see that everyone in the world becomes liberated then you must not stop Me from My decision. And You are the last person to lament over this because You know the confidential reason for My advent."



Main entrance to Sri Gauranga Bari Temple where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu took sannyasa

Hearing about the Lord's departure, all the devotees fell the ground unconscious. Filled with agony, they all cried loudly. Placing their arms around each other's necks, they all lamented in various ways. "O Gopinatha, what a terrible night we have passed!" Holding their heads they all wept.

"How will we live without seeing that moonlike face? What is the use to continue this sinful life?" Speaking in this way, some of them rolled on the ground, and some of them beat their chests. The Lord's house resounded as the devotees cried uncontrollably. Whatever devotee came to see the Lord, all were drown in an ocean of separation. Constantly weeping, the devotees fell on the ground saying, "The merciful Lord of the forlorn left us to take *sannyasa*, thus throwing us in an ocean of lamentation."

Sri Gauranga, after crossing the Ganges, arrived at Katwa. Instructed previously by the Lord, Nityananda Prabhu, Gadadhara, Mukunda, Candrasekhara Acarya and Brahmananda Bharati each arrived there separately. Along with His intimate associates, the Lord, like a maddened lion, arrived there to meet Kesava Bharati. Upon seeing the Lord's wonderful bodily effulgence, the pious Kesava Bharati stood up. The Lord fell flat offering obeisances and folding His hands, He offered prayers, "*O master please be merciful on Me. You are most compassionate, the deliverer of the fallen. Lord Krishna always sits in your heart, therefore you are qualified to give Krishna to Me. I have no other desire than the service of Krishna. Please instruct Me accordingly.*"



Transcendentalists discussing *sannyasa* pastimes of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu at Gauranga Bari Temple

The Lord's body seemed to float in the water of ecstatic love. The Lord then began to dance and cry out loudly. Millions and millions of people gathered there from where no one knew. With unblinking eyes, they all drank the beauty of the Lord's form. The flow of tears from the Lord's eyes was beyond the description of even Lord Ananta. As the Lord danced in a circle His tears bathed everyone who was gathered around Him. Thus soaked in the waters of love of God, everyone - man and woman, young and old - all chanted, "Hari! Hari!" The Lord sometimes shivered, sometimes perspired, and sometimes fell unconscious. The people were frightened seeing the Lord fall to the ground.

Taking a straw in His teeth, the Lord, who is the proprietor of unlimited universes, begged everyone for the service of Lord Krishna. Seeing the Lord's humility everyone cried in grief. *"How will His mother survive? What a terrible night she must have passed! What pious activity His wife performed to obtain the Lord as her husband? And by what misfortune she lost Him? How will His mother and wife survive when even our hearts are broken?"* In this way the ladies wept with sorrow completely bound in the ropes of Sri Caitanya. After sometime Sri Gauranga controlled Himself and sat down surrounded by His associates. Kesava Bharati was absorbed in an ocean of bliss after seeing the devotional sentiments displayed by the Lord. He then offered his prayers to the Lord, *"The devotion which I have seen with my eyes today is not found except in the Lord Himself. I have certainly*

understood that You alone are the spiritual master of the entire world, therefore no one is qualified to become Your guru. I think that in order to teach the people in general You will accept me as Your guru."



Exact spot at Sri Gauranga Bari Temple where Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu had His hair cut before taking *sannyasa*.

Then Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the life of all, sat down to have His head shaved. However, just as the barber Madhu came to shave the Lord, at that moment the sound of weeping was heard. The barber hesitated to shave the beautiful hair of the Lord, rather he also began to cry. The devotees headed by Nityananda Prabhu all started weeping and rolling on the ground. What to speak of the devotees even the people in general all began to cry in grief. One woman said, "Who has invented this system of *sannyasa*?" Speaking like this the ladies all sighed deeply. Hidden from view all the demigods also cried. In this way the entire world was filled with the sound of crying. Such compassion was shown by Sri Gauracandra that even dry wood and stone could melt. This pastime of the Lord was displayed for the deliverance of the living entities and the weeping was evidence for this.



Tree where under Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu took His seat to get His hair shaved.

Sri Gauracandra was greatly agitated by the mellows of love. He was constantly shedding tears and His body trembled. Lord got up and started dancing, continuously chanting, "Hari Bol!". As Mukunda sang the Lord was unable to remain steady even while sitting, but due to ecstatic love He trembled and tears flowed from His eyes. In this way the Lord constantly shouted, "Hari Bol!" *The barber was therefore unable to do his work. His eyes filled with tears, and he was unable to see.* Mahaprabhu requested him to use the razor his hair. After some time, Shri Madhu, the barber did the work of shaving the Lord's beautiful hair from his head.

THE TREE WHEREUNDER LORD
GOURANGA TOOK HIS SEAT-THE
DIVINE TREE OF KANTAKNAGAR
THAT SHELTERED LORD GOURANGA
2005

Tree where under Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu took His seat to get His hair shaved.

The barber, Madhu, cried out in anguish, "What misery I have caused! What have I done?" and fell unconscious upon the earth. A great uproar of weeping and wailing filled all four directions. Who could console them? What a pitiful sight. The men and women there were unable to speak, and seeing this pitiful sight, the birds in the trees also fell silent.



Sri Gauranga Bari Temple at Katwa where Lord Caitanya took *sannyasa*. This is the actual site where Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu took *sannyasa* from Sri Keshava Bharati. Sri Keshava Bharati named Him "Sri Krishna Caitanya"

Thereafter the Lord of all took His bath in the Ganges and sat for His *sannyasa* ceremony. Sri Gauracandra, who is declared in the *Vedas* as the spiritual master of all, deceptively spoke something to Kesava Bharati, "In a dream some *mahajana* appeared to Me and spoke some *sannyasa* mantra in My ear. Please examine whether it is appropriate or not." Speaking in this way, the Lord spoke the mantra in Kesava Bharati's ear. Thus the Lord by trickery made Kesava Bharati His disciple. Kesava Bharati was struck with great wonder and said, "This is the best amongst all mantras. By the mercy of Lord Krishna, what is unknown to You?"



Sri Gauranga Bari Temple at Katwa where Lord Caitanya took *sannyasa*

According to the instructions of the Lord, the broad-minded Kesava Bharati then spoke that very *mantra* in the ear of the Lord. The auspicious sound of the holy names was heard in the four directions. The Lord then put on the enchanting saffron dress and appeared as beautiful as millions of cupids. His beautiful body was decorated with sandalwood pulp and flower garlands. Holding His *danda* and *kamandalu* in His hands, the Lord was overwhelmed in ecstatic love.



Sri Gauranga Bari Temple at Katwa where Lord Caitanya took *sannyasa*
Srila Vedavyasa has given description in his *Visnu-sahasra-nama* that the Lord would advent as a *sannyasi*. Now this statement has been fulfilled by the best of the *brahmanas*. This secret is well-known to the society of Vaishnavas. *sannyasa krcchamah santo nistha-santi parayanah* "That Lord, Visnu, who will accept *sannyasa*, will be fully surrendered to Krishna. He will be fixed in determination, engaged in the performance of *hari-nama yajna*, and He will destroy the non-devotee followers of impersonalism. He will be fully peaceful and possessed of *mahabhava*."



Devotees taking *darshan* of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu

Kesava Bharati then began to think of a name to give the Lord, "I cannot find such a Vaishnava in the fourteen worlds. This is my conviction. Therefore I will give a name that is not previously heard, then my desire will be fulfilled. Although the disciple of a Bharati should be named Bharati, that name is not appropriate."



Care-taker pujari at the Sri Gauranga Bari Temple

As the fortunate Kesava Bharati was thinking like this, Sudha Sarasvati, the transcendental goddess of learning, appeared on his tongue. Finding the suitable name, the pure-hearted Kesava Bharati placed his hand on the chest of the Lord and said, "*You have induced the worlds to chant the name of Krishna and by inaugurating the movement of sankirtana, You have roused people's consciousness (chaitana). Therefore Your name will be Sri Krishna Caitanya. Because of You, everyone will be grateful.*" When Kesava Bharati spoke this, everyone chanted, "Jaya! Jaya!" and flowers showered on them. The Vaishnavas floated in waves of transcendental happiness and began to chant, "Hari! Hari!" The devotees then offered obeisances to Kesava Bharati, and the Lord felt satisfied on receiving His name.



Transcendentalists discussing *sannyasa* pastimes of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu at Gauranga Bari Temple.

In this way as the holy name of Sri Krishna Caitanya was manifest, all the devotees fell flat offering obeisances. By accepting *sannyasa*, the merciful Lord thus became famous as Sri Krishna Caitanya. Many other pastimes took place there, however only Lord Nityananda knows them all. Whoever hears this pastime will certainly become a servant of Sri Caitanya. By hearing this pastime of the Lord's acceptance of *sannyasa* one will achieve the wealth of *Krishna-prema* and will destroy one's bondage due to fruitive activities. [ref. *Sri Caitanya Bhagavata* by Srila Vrindavana Das Thakura]



Sri Gadadhara dasa established this temple at Katwa

***Sri Caitanya-Caritamṛta* Adi-lila chapter 10 verse 53 states that Sri Gadadhara Dasa, the twenty-third branch of the Caitanya tree, was understood to be the topmost, for he induced all the Muslim Kazis to chant the holy name of Lord Hari.**



Sri Gadadhara dasa established this temple at Katwa



Srimati Tulasi Maharani at Gauranga Bari Temple courtyard



Devotee residents cooking *bhoga* for the pleasure of Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu

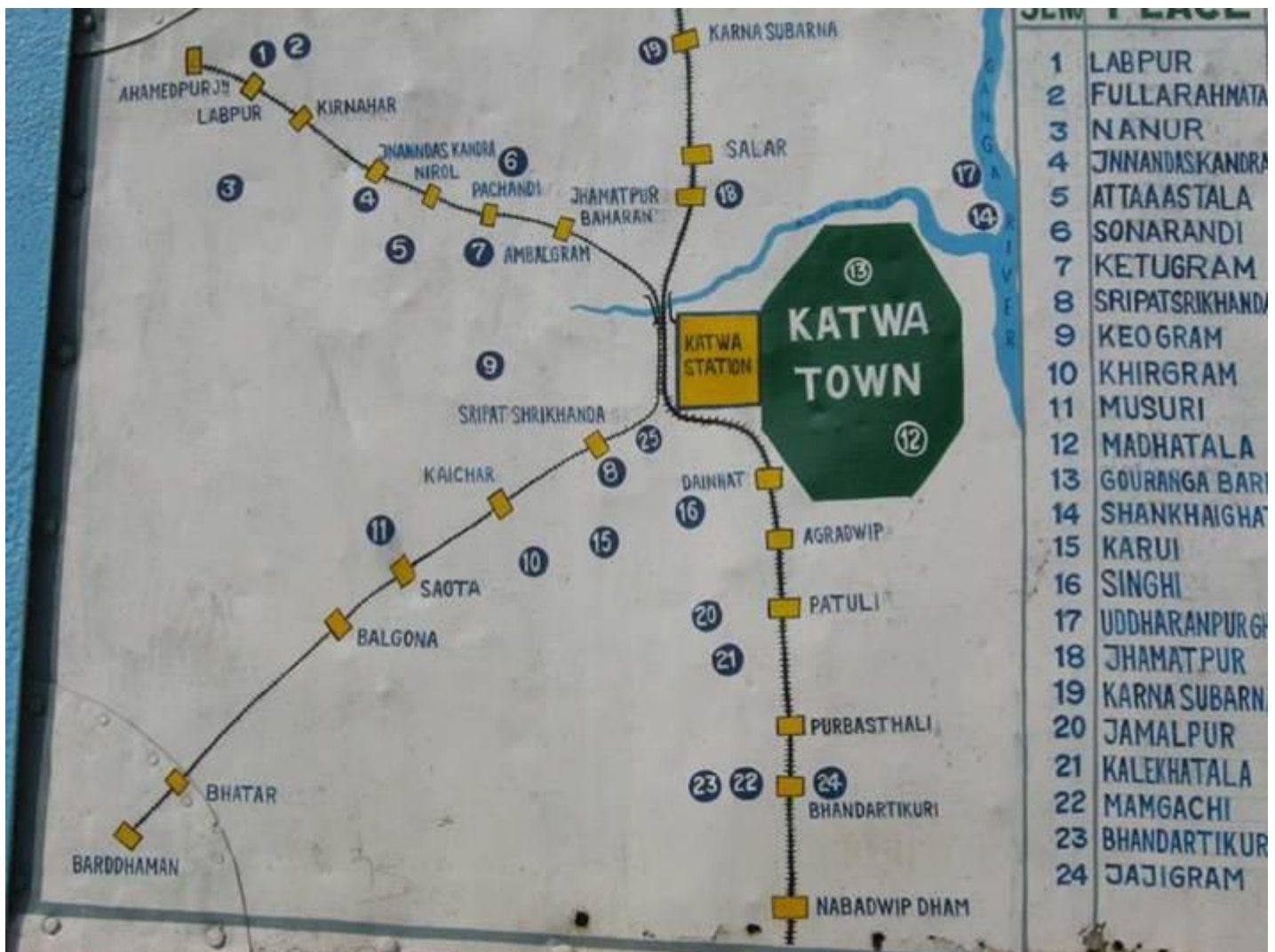


Sri Gauranga Bari Temple at Katwa



Places of interest near Katwa

Near Katwa is Yajigrama [4 kms; where great souls Srila Narottama Dasa Thankura, Srila Srinivas Acarya and Srila Ramacandra Kaviraja lived], Madhai Tala Temple [where the tombs of these two brothers, Jagai and Madhai are there] and Sri Path of Narahari Sarkar and Raghunandan Thakura.



Katwa map and places of interest

Katwa is about an hour's distance from Sridham Mayapur.

PASTIME: LORD SRI GAURANGA MAHAPRABHU TAKES SANNYASA IN KATWA

A Student asks why the Lord is chanting the names of the Gopis

One day the Supreme Lord Caitanya was immersed in the pastimes of the *gopis* of Vrindavana. He was incessantly chanting, "*gopi, gopi*,". Along came a student scholar from somewhere and without understanding His mood said to Him, "O Nimai Pandit why are You chanting *gopi! gopi!*. You should better chant Krishna's name. What pious gain is there in chanting '*gopi! gopi!*' But according to the Vedas one's piety increases many folds by chanting Krishna's name!" An ignorant man can never comprehend the Lord's spiritual state. The Lord said, "Krishna! He is a plunderer! Who worships Him? That ungrateful Krishna killed the innocent Vali and although His winsome looks and strength has won many women He deliberately cuts off a woman's nose. Again, He begs everything from Bali Maharaj leaving him with nothing and then sends him down to help. What will I gain chanting His name?" Saying this Lord Caitanya picked up a stick and still immersed in '*prema bhava*' He rushed towards the student menacingly. The student jumped up and ran out with the Lord close behind in hot pursuit, raving and ranting. The student ran in fear of his life not understanding the Lord's real mood.

The devotees ran after Their Lord, and catching up with Him brought Him back and pacified Him. The student in the meanwhile made good his escape. Panting heavily and drenched with perspiration he came to his friends. They were all curious to see his plight and enquired the reason for his fright. He replied, "do not enquire further! I

am lucky to be here alive and breathing. Everyone says, "Nimai Pandit is very saintly, but today when I visited Him I found Him chanting '*gopi, gopi*'. He is only chanting these names day and night. So I told Him, "what are You doing o learned man, You should chant 'Krishna, Krishna' as is recommended in the scriptures. These words enraged Him to such an extent that He came charging at me with a stick. Not only that, He was even cursing and abusing Krishna, which I am afraid to repeat. Only destiny could have intervened to save my life today."

The students began to laugh foolishly and air their vacuous views. One said, "the people say He is a good 'Vaishnava' then why does He come chasing a brahmana with violent intentions." Another offered, "how can you call Him a Vaishnava if He refuses to utter Krishna's name?" Yet another remarked, "it sounds very strange that a Vaishnava is chanting only '*gopi, gopi*'!" Another said forcefully, "why should we feel cowered and shrivel in this hovel. Don't we also possess that power so characteristic of *brahmanas*. He maybe a *brahmana*, so are we learned in the scriptures. Why should we tolerate His threatening. He is not a king or officer that He can punish us, let us group together and next time He tries to intimidate us we will thwart Him. He maybe the son of the learned Jagannatha Misra but our parents are no less worthy. Just see, yesterday we were studying together as mates and today how does He become suddenly the big 'master'."

The offenders and atheists spoke so caustically against Him but Lord Caitanya, the Supersoul residing in everyone's heart knew everything. One day He was sitting with all His devotees when suddenly He made a mysterious remark, whose meaning was too shrouded for anyone to understand. He said, "the medicine '*pippalikhand*' was prepared to cure the excess phlegm but instead it increased the phlegm in the body." Saying this the Lord began laughing loudly musing over something incomprehensible to all, the devotees became very concerned.

Lord Nityananda knew the inner meaning of the Lord's statement and the Lord's confidential mood. He thought, "soon the Lord will leave home and take *sannyasa*." Lord Nityananda fell into deep despair. The life air seemed to leave His body at the thought of seeing His beloved Lord Caitanya, beautiful as He is to be shorn of those lovely locks of hair.

Lord Gaura tells Lord Nitai about His intention to take sannyasa

Lord Caitanya suddenly clasped Lord Nityananda's hand taking Him away to a quiet and lonely spot. Lord Caitanya said,

"listen, dear Nityananda, I am revealing My heart to You. The purpose of My advent was to deliver the entire world, but instead of delivering the living entities it seems I have to ultimately destroy them. The people are supposed to attain salvation just by seeing Me, whereas now their material bonds become stronger. As soon as they contemplated on beating Me they became tightly chained to eternal bondage. I incarnated with the intention of liberating the good and innocent mass but now I have spoiled everything and am leading the people to their doom. Therefore, I have decided to shave off My head and take to the renounced life of a sannyasi, and go begging door to door. I will stand at the doors of those who wanted to attack Me with a begging bowl. Then these same aggressors will fall at My feet and in this way I will deliver the whole universe. Everyone respects a sannyasi, no one will ever think of harming a sannyasi. Tomorrow when I take up begging as a sannyasi I can go safe anywhere. I have fully decided to take up the sannyasa order and leave My home and family. Please do not feel sad due to this, rather please give Me

permission to take up the renounced life. Whatever is Your desire I will certainly act in accordance, but You should consider that I have taken this incarnation for a specific reason and so require Your permission in this matter. If you really want to see that everyone in the world becomes liberated then you must not stop Me from My decision. And You are the last person to lament over this because You know the confidential reason for My advent."

When Nityananda heard from His dear Lord that He was shaving His beautiful locks and entering the renounced order, Nityananda's heart shattered to pieces in grief. He did not know what to say to Lord Caitanya, but He was sure that the Lord will go ahead with His decision.

Lord Nityananda replied, *"My dear Lord, You are absolutely independent, whatever You wish must be executed. Who can desist You or go against Your wishes, whatever You have decided is surely to happen. You are the maintainer and protector of this cosmic manifestation, Your wishes are always for the good of the people. Who but You can conceive the best method for liberating the conditioned souls. You are perfectly free to act in any way You think best. And yet I think You may present these facts to all the Vaishnavas and ask their opinion. After hearing them You may do whatever You think is necessary."*

Lord Nityananda's words satisfied Lord Caitanya and He embraced Nityananda again and again. Thus advised Lord Caitanya went to meet the assembly of Vaishnavas. The paralysing thought that Lord Caitanya will take *sannyasa* echoed in grey emptiness in Lord Nityananda's mind. He walked about normally but within Him raged a fitful storm. *"How will Sacimata contain her grief stricken life once her Nimai abandons home."* He thought, *"How will she live through the long lonely days and nights without Him?"* Each time these thoughts raised though His mind He felt devastated with despair and finding a secluded corner wept bitterly because He could not bear to think what will happen to Sacimata.

Lord Caitanya came to Mukunda's house. Mukunda was overjoyed to see his beloved Lord coming personally to his house. the Lord said, "sing something about Krishna." Mukunda began to sing and the Lord listened to the transcendental sweetness of Mukunda's singing. Withdrawing the ecstasy within Himself the Lord calmed Himself and spoke to Mukunda. The Lord said, *"Mukunda, please listen to Me, I have decided to leave My family and home to join the sannyasa order. Shaving My hair I shall travel all over."* The Lord's words crushed Mukunda's joy he had felt earlier on seeing the Lord. Piteously he begged the Lord, *"my Lord since You are firm in Your resolve to become a mendicant, it must happen, but wait a little longer and stay with us and pass time in 'Krishna kirtan' then do what You have to."*

Lord Caitanya left Mukunda's home and went to see Gadadhara Pandita. Gadadhara offered obeisances to his Lord, praying at His lotus feet. The Lord addressed Gadadhara, *"I want you to hear Me carefully please. Gadadhara, I have to leave My family and home for the sake of My Lord Krishna. I shall shave My head and as a mendicant go wherever the road leads."* Gadadhara remained motionless, thunderstruck. Feeling a burning grief swallowing him within, he replied, *"Your words are very strange My Lord. You mean to say that one can attain Krishna simply by shaving the head and leaving home, and not by staying in the householder life? What spiritual gain is there in shaving one's head, all this maybe Your opinion, but certainly not found anywhere in the Vedic scriptures. How do You propose to leave a widowed mother all alone, at the very outset You will be burdened with the sin of bringing*

about Your mother's death. You are her life a dream, if You are gone what reason will she have to remain alive. Is one not dear to the Supreme Lord if one remains in the house, in fact a householder is liked by everyone. And if in spite of everything I told You, You still want to cling on to Your decision, then do what You like."

Like this the Lord visited all His dear and near ones and told everyone of His plan to take *sannyasa*. Whoever heard this was shocked with grief. They wept bitterly at the thought of seeing their beloved Lord, beautiful as the springtime full moon, shorn off all His black cascading curls. They lamented, *"what will be the use then to string a garland for His curly locks."* Yet another said, *"how will I live without seeing His delightful locks."* Yet another said beating his head, *"I will never be able to smell the transcendental aroma from His hair anymore."* The devotees were wailing in grief, tossed about in an ocean of despair, loudly they wailed, for they were going to lose their beloved Lord.

Intense pain experienced by the Devotees in Navadvipa to hear about Lord Gauranga taking *sannyasa*

All the devotees very much perturbed and grief stricken, they were already feeling the pangs of separation from their beloved Lord Caitanya, they cried piteously. They said amongst themselves, *"where will He go after taking *sannyasa*? Where will we see Him again? Surely, He is not going to return to this village after accepting a mendicant's robe, there is no way of finding out where He will be and which direction He will travel in."* The devotees were constantly worrying in this manner, Their hearts filled with consternation that they may never see their most precious Lord again, no one took interest in food and sleep any longer.

The Lord could not bear the pain His devotees were suffering. Smiling pleasantly to alleviate their distress the Lord assured them, *"why do you unnecessarily vex yourselves? I am always present with you. It is wrong of you to think that once I have taken *sannyasa* I will leave all of you and go far away. Not for a moment can I leave you. All of you are My eternal associates. Not just for this birth, but birth after birth. Those of you who are associated with Me in this incarnation will eternally remain with Me in the mellow of congregational chanting of the Holy name. In every millennium I advent and in every one of My innumerable incarnations you have participated in My pastimes. With this advent I have come with two incarnations, one is the congregational chanting and the other is My transcendental deity form full of bliss. In both these incarnations you must participate in My pastimes with full vigour and joy, chanting with Me in ecstasy. I am taking *sannyasa* only to educate humanity, therefore please allay your fears and worries."*

Placating the distressed devotees with His sweet words He embraced each one of them again and again. Lord's words had a pacifying effect on the devotees, and feeling more assured they allowed their beloved master to leave. Word spread swiftly everywhere that Nimai was going to embrace the mendicants life. When Saci devi heard this news her heart almost stopped. Her grief was so intense that the pain of the entire universe seemed like nothing. She fell to the ground unconscious, tears flowing in torrents and remained lying on the floor, a heart rending sight, the lotus eyed Lord saw all this sitting very still and grave.

Sacimata cried out to Nimai saying, *"My darling son, please do not leave Your mother and go, all of us are simply depending on seeing Your divine lotus face. Your lotus eyes and moonlike glowing face, ruby lips and pearly jasmine white teeth, words like showers of ambrosia, graceful gentle elephants grit are impossible to live without.*

Your constant followers Advaita and Srinivas and Your bosom friend Nityananda and Gadadhara are always there, just stay home and perform Your congregational chanting. You have incarnated to teach everyone the principles of religion, then what religion teaches one to leave one's mother. You embody the religious principles and if You forsake Your mother then how will You teach the world about religion?" Laden with immense love for her son Sacidevi waited out these words, and the Lord heard all this quietly, unable to speak, His voice choked with intense love for His mother.

She continued, "Your elder brother left some time ago and then Your father left for the Lord's eternal abode, only You remained, and looking at You I could forget my pains of separation; now If You leave I will certainly give up my life. My dearest son, just see the pitiful sight of Your lonely widowed mother, how can You leave me. Stay home, Nityananda is always here, You can perform kirtan in Your own house with all the devotees. You are everything to me. Your eyes are full of love and compassion and Your long hands are exquisite, Your words are cascades of nectar. My darkened house without a lamp is illuminated by Your presence, and Your lotus feet is the source of life giving elixir." Silently Visvambhara sat and listened, bearing the deep pain within as His mother out of intense love spoke painful words of separation; like Kausalya trying to reason with Lord Ramacandra.

Lord Gauranga pacifies His Mother

Sacidevi spoke on unable to calm herself the Lord still remained silently listening. She felt drained out, rampaged by the storm of grief, food and sleep were to her now a curse. The Lord seeing His mother's condition, revealed to her some secrets that might pacify her. He said, *"Mother, please calm yourself and listen, I have been your son since many births. You were once Prishin and I was your son. Again you became Aditi in another life and you were residing then in the heavenly planets and I became your son Vamana. Then once again I became your son Kapila when you were Devahuti. When you were Kaushalya I was your son Rama. Another time you were Devaki in Mathura imprisoned in the dungeons of the cruel King Kamsa, and I became your son Krishna. In this present incarnation I will be your son twice. You will be the mother of My incarnation as the "deity form", and also the mother of My incarnation as the "Holy name". Mother, like this you have had Me as your son eternally, I can never leave you mother. I revealed this to you very confidentially, now mother please allay your fears and grief."* Sacidevi on hearing this esoteric narration was somewhat calmed.

In this way Nimai passed His time in the ecstasy of *sankirtana*. No one can understand the activities of the Lord, who is the fully independent Lord of all. The Lord always enjoys performing *kirtana* along with His devotees. All the devotees were so fully absorbed in transcendental ecstasy that they forgot themselves completely. The fortunate devotees enjoyed pastimes with the Lord, whom the *Vedas* personified desire to see.

One day the Lord secretly told Nityananda which day He would leave home to take *sannyasa*. O Nityananda, please listen!

This may be disclosed to only *five* persons. On the coming Makara Sankranti day I will certainly leave home and take *sannyasa*. There is a village named Katwa near Indrani. At that place lives the pure soul, Kesava Bharati. I will certainly take *sannyasa* from him. The five persons You may tell are, *My mother, Gadadhara, Brahmananda Bharati, Sri Candrasekhara Acarya, and Mukunda*.

The Lord spoke this to Nityananda in private, so no one else knew. Then Nityananda Prabhu told the five persons about the Lord's coming departure. That day the Lord spent engaged in *sankirtana* along with the Vaishnavas. After happily taking His noon meal, the Lord went to see the Ganges in the evening. He offered obeisances, sat on the bank for some time and then returned home.

Sri Gaurasundara sat at home surrounded by His followers. No one knew of the Lord's desire to leave home and take *sannyasa*, therefore everyone happily enjoyed the company of the Lord. The lotus-eyed Lord sat there with His limbs decorated with a beautiful flower garland and scented sandalwood pulp. Whatever Vaishnava who came to see Him brought along sandal pulp and flower garland. The Lord attracted so many people that no one knew from where they all came. Even Lord Brahma had no power to count the number of persons who came to see the Lord.

Whoever came fell flat offering obeisances and gazed on the beautiful face of the Lord. Lord Gauranga then gave them a garland from His neck and instructed them, **"Chant the holy name of Krishna. Worship Krishna, and don't think of anything other than Krishna. If you have any affection for Me, then don't speak about any topics other than Krishna. Whether you are sleeping, eating, or waking, always think of Krishna day and night and chant His name."**

In this way the Lord cast His compassionate glance on whoever came and then He sent them home. In this way so many people came and went without knowing each other. The beautiful body of the Lord, decorated with sandal pulp and flower garlands, could not be compared to the insignificant beauty of the full moon. After receiving the Lord's mercy, all the people became ecstatic and left loudly chanting, "*Hari! Hari!*".

At that time the pious Kolavecha Sridhara came bringing a loki in his hand. Seeing the loki the Lord inquired, "*Where did you get that?*". The Lord however thought, "*Tomorrow I will leave, therefore I'll not be able to eat this. Whatever is brought by Sridhara cannot be wasted, so I must eat this today.*" Thinking like this, in order to maintain His affection for His devotees, He requested His mother to cook the loki. Just at that time someone else came with a pot of milk. The Lord smilingly told His mother, "*This is very nice. Please cook these together.*" Mother Saci immediately went to cook in great satisfaction. In this way the son of Saci is so affectionate to His devotees. The Lord of Vaikuntha thus happily spent the evening.

After seeing everyone off, Lord Visvambhara came to take His dinner. When He finished eating Lord Gauranga washed His mouth and went to His bedroom. There He slept under the influence of His *yoga-maya* along with Gadadhara and Haridasa Thakura. Mother Saci, knowing that the Lord would depart, was unable to sleep and remained awake weeping. The Lord awoke for leaving during the *brahma-muhurta*. He understood the auspicious time for His departure had come by observing His breathing.

Gadadhara and Haridasa Thakura also awoke, and Gadadhara told the Lord, "*I will accompany You.*" The Lord however, replied, "*I am fully independent, one without a second. This is My pastime.*" Mother Saci then came and sat at the doorway to see the Lord's departure. Seeing His mother, the Lord held her hands and solaced her in various ways. "*You have maintained Me very nicely. Because of you I have studied and learned. You have not cared for your personal happiness, but you have increased*

My pleasure throughout My life. The amount of affection you have shown towards Me in each moment, is more than I can repay in millions of kalpas. Only by your mercy will I be relieved of My debt. Still, however, I will remain indebted to you lifetime after lifetime. Please listen, dear mother, this entire creation is under the control of the Supreme Lord. No one has the strength to be independent. Who can understand His will by which living entities sometimes meet and sometimes separate. Whether I leave now or after ten days, you should not lament. Your loving dealings with Me are very pleasing, therefore I take full responsibility for you."

Placing His hand on mother Saci's chest, the Lord repeatedly solaced her, saying, "I will take full care of you." Whatever the Lord spoke, mother Saci quietly heard as she constantly wept. Thus mother Saci, the mother of the universe, became as grave and quiet as mother Earth. Who can understand the inconceivable pastimes of Lord Krishna? The Lord then took the dust of His mother's feet and after circumambulating her, He immediately departed. The Lord, who is the hero of Vaikuntha, left home to take *sannyasa* in order to deliver the fallen souls.

When the Lord left, the universal mother, Saci, became almost inert and was unable to speak. All the devotees, after taking their morning bath, arrived at the Lord's house unaware of the Lord's departure. Although they came to offer obeisances to the Lord, they were only able to find mother Saci sitting outside the doorway. The magnanimous Srinivas was the first to inquire, "O mother, why are you sitting at the doorway?" The almost inert mother Saci was unable to reply, only tears flowed continually from her eyes. After some time She said, "Please listen all of you. All the Vaishnavas are eligible to share the property of the Lord. "Whatever things are left by Him, you may all distribute amongst yourselves. This is the verdict of the *sastras*. So be satisfied, do as you please and let me go from here."

Hearing about the Lord's departure, all the devotees fell the ground unconscious. Filled with agony, they all cried loudly. Placing their arms around each other's necks, they all lamented in various ways. "O Gopinatha, what a terrible night we have passed!" Holding their heads they all wept. "How will we live without seeing that moonlike face? What is the use to continue this sinful life?" Speaking in this way, some of them rolled on the ground, and some of them beat their chests. The Lord's house resounded as the devotees cried uncontrollably. Whatever devotee came to see the Lord, all were drown in an ocean of separation. Constantly weeping, the devotees fell on the ground saying, "The merciful Lord of the forlorn left us to take *sannyasa*, thus throwing us in an ocean of lamentation."

All the devotees cried and fell unconscious. They loudly chanted, "Hari! Hari! What is the use of our wealth, our families or even our lives, when the Lord has left? They cried and rolled on the ground of the Lord's courtyard beating their chests and exclaiming, "O Lord Hari! O Visvambhara! You have left to take *sannyasa* without telling us!" Mukunda, Murari, Sridhara, Gadadhara, Gangadasa, Srinivas and his family, Candrasekhara, and Haridasa Thakura all continually cried in this way. Hearing the crying of the devotees, the people of Nadia rushed to see what has happened. By not seeing the Lord's face, they too were stricken with grief and also began to cry. Whether young or old, whatever devotee came from the town, they all cried incessantly. The atheists, however, laughed saying, "Now we'll not see Nimai again."

After some time the devotees became pacified and sat around mother Saci. Meanwhile, the news of the Lord's departure for taking *sannyasa* soon spread

throughout the Navadvipa. Hearing the news, all the people were struck with wonder and came to the Lord's house. When they saw the Lord's house empty, they also began to cry. Hearing the people lament, even the offenders and atheists became aggrieved. "We are very sinful, therefore we could not recognize Him. They repented in this way and they also began to cry. The people of the town cried and rolled on the ground lamenting, "We'll not see the Lord's moonlike face again!" Someone said, "Let us burn our houses and wearing earrings we'll leave home and become yogis." Someone else said, "When the Lord Himself has left Navadvipa, then why are we still breathing?" In this way all the men and women of Nadia could not think of anything, but simply lamented.

The independent Lord however, knew when and how to deliver the fallen living entities. Those who were filled with offenses and envy were also bitten by the snake of the Lord's separation. All glories to the merciful Lord Gaurasundara, the Lord of all! He expertly delivered everyone.

Lord Caitanya prepares to accept *sannyasa* from Keshava Bharati

Sri Gauranga, after crossing the Ganges, arrived at Kantaka Nagara (Katwa) that very day. Instructed previously by the Lord, Nityananda Prabhu, Gadadhara, Mukunda, Candrasekhara Acarya and Brahmananda Bharati each arrived there separately. Along with His intimate associates, the Lord, like a maddened lion, arrived there to meet Kesava Bharati. Upon seeing the Lord's wonderful bodily effulgence, the pious Kesava Bharati stood up. The Lord fell flat offering obeisances and folding His hands, He offered prayers, *"O master please be merciful on Me. You are most compassionate, the deliverer of the fallen. Lord Krishna always sits in your heart, therefore you are qualified to give Krishna to Me. I have no other desire than the service of Krishna. Please instruct Me accordingly."*

The Lord's body seemed to float in the water of ecstatic love. The Lord then began to dance and cry out loudly. Mukunda and the other devotees began to sing while the son of Saci danced in His own mood. Millions and millions of people gathered there from where no one knew. With unblinking eyes, they all drank the beauty of the Lord's form. The flow of tears from the Lord's eyes was beyond the description of even Lord Ananta. As the Lord danced in a circle His tears bathed everyone who was gathered around Him. Thus soaked in the waters of love of God, everyone - man and woman, young and old - all chanted, "Hari! Hari!" The Lord sometimes shivered, sometimes perspired, and sometimes fell unconscious. The people were frightened seeing the Lord fall to the ground.

Taking a straw in His teeth, the Lord, who is the proprietor of unlimited universes, begged everyone for the service of Lord Krishna. Seeing the Lord's humility everyone cried in grief. *"How will His mother survive? What a terrible night she must have passed! What pious activity His wife performed to obtain the Lord as her husband? And by what misfortune she lost Him? How will His mother and wife survive when even our hearts are broken?"* In this way the ladies wept with sorrow completely bound in the ropes of Sri Caitanya. After sometime Sri Gauranga controlled Himself and sat down surrounded by His associates. Kesava Bharati was absorbed in an ocean of bliss after seeing the devotional sentiments displayed by the Lord. He then offered his prayers to the Lord, *"The devotion which I have seen with my eyes today is not found except in the Lord Himself. I have certainly understood that You alone are the spiritual master of the entire world, therefore no one is qualified to become Your guru. I think that in order to teach the people in general You will accept me as Your guru."*

"Please don't deceive Me. Give Me initiation so that I may become a servant of Lord Krishna." Speaking in this way, the Lord spent that night engaged in *Krishna-katha*. Early the next morning the protector of all planets rose and instructed Candrasekhara, *"You are practiced in the performance of all the Vedic rituals, therefore I appoint you as My representative."* Candrasekhara began to perform the required Vedic ceremonies. Various items such as milk, yogurt, butter, betel, sandalwood flowers, a sacred thread, and cloth were all brought by people from surrounding villages. Various eatables were also brought, although no one knew who brought everything or where everything was coming from. Everyone who came chanted the holy name, *"Hari! Hari!"* Indeed, no other sound could be heard.

Shaving of Lord Gauranga Mahaprabhu's beautiful hair

Then Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the life of all, sat down to have His head shaved (including *sikha*). However, just as the barber Madhu came to shave the Lord, at that moment the sound of weeping was heard. The barber hesitated to shave the beautiful hair of the Lord, rather he also began to cry. The devotees headed by Nityananda Prabhu all started weeping and rolling on the ground. What to speak of the devotees even the people in general all began to cry in grief. *One woman said, "Who has invented this system of sannyasa?" Speaking like this the ladies all sighed deeply. Hidden from view all the demigods also cried. In this way the entire world was filled with the sound of crying. Such compassion was shown by Sri Gauracandra that even dry wood and stone could melt. This pastime of the Lord was displayed for the deliverance of the living entities and the weeping was evidence for this.*

Sri Gauracandra was greatly agitated by the mellows of love. He was constantly shedding tears and His body trembled. Lord Visvambhara got up and started dancing, continuously chanting, "Hari Bol!". As Mukunda sang the Lord was unable to remain steady even while sitting, but due to ecstatic love He trembled and tears flowed from His eyes. In this way the Lord constantly shouted, "Hari Bol!" *The barber was therefore unable to do his work. His eyes filled with tears, and he was unable to see. Mahaprabhu requested him to use the razor his hair. After some time, Shri Madhu, the barber did the work of shaving the Lord's beautiful hair from his head. The barber cried out in anguish, "What misery I have caused! What have I done?" and fell unconscious upon the earth. A great uproar of weeping and wailing filled all four directions. Who could console them? What a pitiful sight. The men and women there were unable to speak, and seeing this pitiful sight, the birds in the trees also fell silent.*

Lord Caitanya accepts Sannyasa

Thereafter the Lord of all took His bath in the Ganges and sat for His *sannyasa* ceremony. Sri Gauracandra, who is declared in the *Vedas* as the spiritual master of all, deceptively spoke something to Kesava Bharati, "In a dream some *mahajana* appeared to Me and spoke some *sannyasa* mantra in My ear. Please examine whether it is appropriate or not."

Speaking in this way, the Lord spoke the mantra in Kesava Bharati's ear. Thus the Lord by trickery made Kesava Bharati His disciple. Kesava Bharati was struck with great wonder and said, "This is the best amongst all mantras. By the mercy of Lord Krishna, what is unknown to You?"

According to the instructions of the Lord, the broad-minded Kesava Bharati then spoke that very *mantra* in the ear of the Lord. The auspicious sound of the holy names was heard in the four directions as the jewel of Vaikuntha accepted the order of *sannyasa*. The Lord then put on the enchanting saffron dress and appeared as beautiful as millions of cupids. His beautiful body was decorated with sandalwood pulp and flower garlands. Holding His *danda* and *kamandalu* in His hands, the Lord was overwhelmed in ecstatic love. The beautiful face of the Lord was more attractive than millions of moons and His two eyes were filled with tears of love. Later that form the Lord manifested as a *sannyasi* will be elaborately described by Vedavyasa.

Srila Vedavyasa has given description in his *Visnu-sahasra-nama* that the Lord would advent as a *sannyasi*. Now this statement has been fulfilled by the best of the *brahmanas*. This secret is well-known to the society of Vaishnavas. *sannyasa krcchamah santo nistha-santi parayanah* "That Lord, Visnu, who will accept *sannyasa*, will be fully surrendered to Krishna. He will be fixed in determination, engaged in the performance of *hari-nama yajna*, and He will destroy the non-devotee followers of impersonalism. He will be fully peaceful and possessed of *mahabhava*."

Kesava Bharati then began to think of a name to give the Lord, "I cannot find such a Vaishnava in the fourteen worlds. This is my conviction. Therefore I will give a name that is not previously heard, then my desire will be fulfilled. Although the disciple of a Bharati should be named Bharati, that name is not appropriate."

As the fortunate Kesava Bharati was thinking like this, Sudha Sarasvati, the transcendental goddess of learning, appeared on his tongue. Finding the suitable name, the pure-hearted Kesava Bharati placed his hand on the chest of the Lord and said, "You have induced the worlds to chant the name of Krishna and by inaugurating the movement of *sankirtana*, You have roused people's consciousness (*chaitana*). Therefore Your name will be **Sri Krishna Caitanya**. Because of You, everyone will be grateful." When Kesava Bharati spoke this, everyone chanted, "Jaya! Jaya!" and flowers showered on them. The Vaishnavas floated in waves of transcendental happiness and began to chant, "Hari! Hari!" The devotees then offered obeisances to Kesava Bharati, and the Lord felt satisfied on receiving His name.

In this way as the holy name of Sri Krishna Caitanya was manifest, all the devotees fell flat offering obeisances. By accepting *sannyasa*, the merciful Lord thus became famous as Sri Krishna Caitanya. The Lord, Sri Caitanya, eternally performs His pastimes, which those who have received His mercy can see. Many other pastimes took place there, however only Lord Nityananda knows them all.

Whoever hears this pastime will certainly become a servant of Sri Caitanya. By hearing this pastime of the Lord's acceptance of *sannyasa* one will achieve the wealth of *Krishna-prema* and will destroy one's bondage due to fruitive activities.

[References: *Sri Caitanya Bhagavata* by Srila Vrindavana Das Thakura and *Sri Caitanya-Caritamrta* by Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami]

Other temples near Katwa:

#1. Yajigrama (or Jajigrama) - Srinivas Acarya Sri Path: Yajigrama is a very important place associated with great Vaishnava stalwarts - Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura, Srinivas Acarya and Srila Ramacandra Kaviraj. Srinivas Acarya's Sri Pat (preaching center) as well as his worship place and house are also here. This is where these great souls lived and a number of pastimes took place. Yajigrama is a small

village 4 km from Katwa. At present there is a temple in Yajigrama at the exact spot where they lived.



Yajigrama Deities of Srila Srinivas Acarya

#2. Madhai Tala Temple: Madhai Tala temple is in Katwa about 3 km from Sri Gauranga Bari Temple. This is the place where the tombs of these two brothers, Jagai and Madhai, are in a place known as Ghosahata, or Madhaitala-grama. It is said that Sri Gopicarana dasa Babaji established a temple of Nitai-Gaura at this place about two hundred fifty years ago. Jagai and Madhai were two brothers born in Navadvipa in a respectable *brahmana* family who later became addicted to all kinds of sinful activities. By the order of Lord Caitanya, both Nityananda Prabhu and Haridasa Thakura used to preach the cult of Krishna consciousness door to door. In the course of such preaching they found Jagai and Madhai, two maddened drunken brothers, who, upon seeing them, began to chase them.

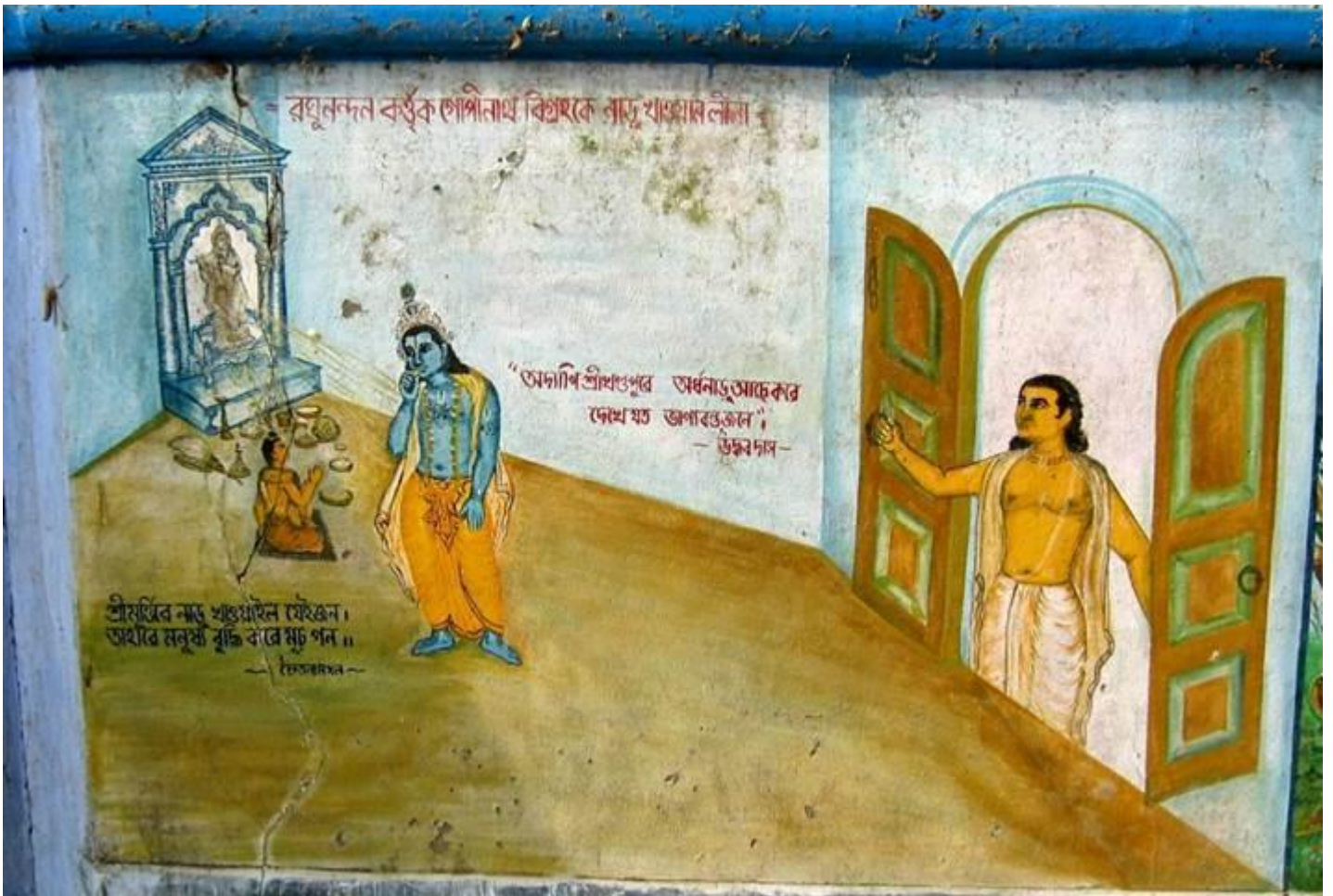
Next day, as soon as Nityananda Prabhu approached the two brothers Jagai and Madhai, to ask them to chant the holy names, one of them threw a piece of earthen pot at Him. It hit Lord Nityananda's forehead, and blood began to flow. Nityananda Prabhu was so kind that He said, "It does not matter that you have thrown this stone at Me. I still request you to chant the holy name of Lord Hari." Jagai immediately fell down at Lord Nityananda's feet and asked Him to pardon his sinful brother. Madhai tried to hurt Nityananda again, but Jagai stopped him and implored him to fall down at Nityananda's feet. When Lord Caitanya heard that Nityananda had been hurt, He came immediately and invoked His Sudarshana chakra (disc weapon of the Supreme Lord), ready to kill the sinners. Nityananda Prabhu reminded Lord Caitanya of His mission, to deliver the fallen souls of Kali-yuga (the present age); that these two brothers were a typical example of most of the population of Kali-yuga.

While Lord Nityananda was talking in this way, both brothers fell at the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya. They agreed to give up all their sinful habits and therefore the Lord accepted them and never again referred to their past misdeeds. When the all-merciful Lord Gauranga saw Jagai's repentant behavior, He immediately embraced him. By seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face and embracing Him, both the sinful brothers were at once cleansed. Thus they received initiation into the chanting of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* from the Lord and were delivered.

Sri Caitanya Caritamrta Adi-lila chapter 10 verse 120 mentions: Jagai and Madhai, the 89th and 90th branches of the tree, were the greatest recipients of Lord Caitanya's mercy. These two brothers were the witnesses who proved that Lord Caitanya was rightly named Patita-pavana, "the deliverer of the fallen souls." In the *Gaura-ganoddesa-dipika* (115) it is said that the two brothers Jagai and Madhai were formerly the doorkeepers named Jaya and Vijaya, who later became Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu. Jagai and Madhai were born in respectable *brahmana* families, but they adopted the professions of thieves and rogues and thus became implicated in all kinds of undesirable activities, especially woman-hunting, intoxication and gambling. Later, by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Sri Nityananda Prabhu, they were initiated, and they got the chance to chant the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra*. As a result of chanting, both brothers became exalted devotees of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. The descendants of Madhai still exist, and they are respectable *brahmanas*. The tombs of these two brothers, Jagai and Madhai, are in a place known as Ghosahata, or Madhaitala-grama, which is situated about one mile south of Katwa. It is said that Sri Gopicarana dasa Babaji established a temple of Nitai-Gaura at this place about two hundred fifty years ago.

#3. Sri Path of Narahari Sarkar and Raghunandan Thakura: Narahari Sarkar was a very special and intimate companion of Mahaprabhu. He is famous for his seva of waving a camara to Mahaprabhu. Raghunandan Thakur is the son of Mukunda Sarkar (eldest brother of Narahari Sarkar). He was a great devotee even when he was a child. When he urged Gopinatha deity to have *bhoga* with his simple heart, Lord factually ate *bhoga* with great pleasure.

#4. Baradanga: As the name Badadanga suggests, there is a big (bara) pond (danga) here. But the main attraction here is a Temple called the Narahari Gaura Kunja. On its courtyard walls, there are paintings. One such painting shows the main Srikhandbasis as listed in *Sri Caitanya Caritamrta*.



Painting of Raghunandan Thakura feeding Gopinatha at Narahari Gaura Kunja

Directions to reach Katwa:

Katwa is about 1 hour from Sri Mayapur Dhama when travelling by train. From Navadvipa town a direct local train runs every hour. The train is quickest way to reach Katwa compared to road journey which could take about 2 hours.

Sri Navadvipa-Dhama Parikrama: <http://www.dandavats.com/?p=14426>

Mayapur TV: <http://Mayapur.tv> / **Vrindavana TV:** <http://Vrindavan.tv/>

Holy Pilgrimages: www.holy-pilgrimages.com

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HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA RAMA HARE HARE ||**